National Thoughts,

Recommended to the

SERIOUS ATTENTION

OF THE

PUBLIC.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

SHEWING

The DAMAGES arising from a Bounty on Corn.

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National Thoughts, &c.

THE wiſdom and good policy of any government cannot, in any inſtance, appear more conſpicuous, than in forming good and proper regulations for promoting and ſecuring a perfect and univerſal induſtry among the poor.

The poor in every country are the claſs of people of the firſt conſequence. Their induſtry is the only ſource of wealth to every country; and it is on their number, ſtrength of body, vigour and moral ſtate, and a right application of all theſe particulars, that the defence of every country depends.

If ſuch be the real ſtate, utility, and weight of the poor in every country; and if the well-being of a country depends entirely on the moral ſtate of the poor: What danger is *England* at this time threatened with, from the idle and licentious behaviour, which in general prevails among this rank of people, throughout the whole kingdom?

It is a known and general obſervation that induſtry creates trade; — trade produces wealth; that the increaſe of wealth will inevitably introduce luxury, which, in its turn, will deſtroy every thing, by producing idleneſs and debauchery, which do gradually infect the whole maſs of the people.

That it is true in fact, that ſuch has been the fate of all countries, which have riſen to any height of wealth, cannot be denied; but I ſhall, notwithſtanding, contend, and do hope to make it appear, that ſuch regulations may be provided, as may prevent ſuch conſequences, and make even luxury ſo far beneficial, as to be an incitement to the introduction of manufactures not yet eſtabliſhed as well as to the improvement of thoſe already eſtabliſhed.

I ſhall ſet forth what I have to propoſe as proper to correct the diſpoſition, which almoſt univerſally prevails among the lower rank of people, to riot and outrage, by ſhewing firſt, how ineffectual penal laws are of themſelves to perform this work; and ſhall then ſhew, what preventive methods may be made uſe of, and that theſe are ſuch, as will, co-operating with the penal laws, give immediate relief, and will in time, in a manner, totally eradicate the cauſes of a miſchief, which at preſent threatens the moſt fatal conſequences.

Firſt then with regard to the operation of penal laws in this caſe. If theſe are ſufficient to cure this evil, or even to check it, how happens it, that, notwithſtanding the great variety of penal laws now in force, criminals of all kinds multiply ſo faſt, as we ſee they almoſt daily do? Why are our priſons now found too ſmall to contain them? How comes it to paſs, that the numbers, which are condemned every ſeſſions at the *Old-Baily*, and executed, make no impreſſion on the minds of the poor, and in no degree deter people from committing capital crimes? And why in many inſtances of leſſer crimes, is the number of offenders, within theſe late years, increaſed to ſuch a degree, that, were the full puniſhments, the laws allow of, adjuged againſt all ſuch offenders, our priſons could not contain perhaps one quarter of them? And is it not for this reaſon alone, that the puniſhments in ſuch caſes are mitigated? And is it not the neceſſary conſequence of this mitigation, that theſe laws are contemned by theſe people, whom they were intended to terrify and reſtrain?

Is there any charm in our priſons, and houſes of correction, which purifies the heart and diſpoſition of thoſe that are confined in them? Or do we not, in fact, find, that thoſe, who have been confined in bridewell, generally prove more immoral after

their enlargement, than before their commitment? And do not the puniſhments for the leſſer crimes, in many inſtances, prove only preparations for the commiſſion of greater?

If this be true, why are our thoughts totally bent on contriving new forms of penal laws? Why ſhould we not think of preventive methods, and conſider whether it may not be reaſonable, as well as poſſible, to remove, at leaſt in ſome degree, the temptation to offend?

If this can be done, our jails will be relieved, the preſent heat and ſeverity of proſecutions will be abated, and our poor will have eaſe, who will moſt amply deſerve it, by that amendment in their morals, which will be the neceſſary conſequence of ſuch methods.

I come now to the ſecond head, namely, that of regulations. And here I muſt obſerve, that it ſeems to me, that drunkenneſs and idleneſs are the ſole cauſes of the calamitous ſituation of this kingdom, with reſpect to the poor.

Whatever regulations therefore can be chaulked out, which will make every individual among the poor leſs capable of getting drunk, and will put him under an obligation of being induſtrious, ſuch muſt be ſalutary at this juncture.

What

What I ſhall propoſe, as a means to prevent the frequent drunkenneſs among the poor, is, to take away all low credit; and that a law ſhould paſs to enact, that no ſum ſhould be ſued for, as a debt, which does not exceed in value the ſum of three pounds.

By this means the poor will be unable to ſpend their time in alehouſes ſo frequently as they do; where their money, and often more than they are worth, is conſumed in idleneſs and drunkenneſs, and their time and health are entirely thrown away; which ought to have been employed in induſtry for the ſupport of their family, as well as for the publick utility and benefit. By theſe means great numbers of the poor are thrown into neceſſitous circumſtances; their families are pinched, and their children, ragged and dirty, are taught to pilfer and beg, to raiſe a little common ſtock to help out a daily maintenance. Thus are theſe miſerable children put under an incapacity of accquiring any one moral habit; ſet out wrong, as ſoon as they are able to go alone, and are tinctured with vice in their earlieſt infancy. And thus thieving gives a maintenance, and ſupplants induſtry and trade.

In this manner are the unfortunate children of the poor of this kingdom educated, whoſe parents are addicted to drunkenneſs, and who are debauched by this credit, which is ſuppoſed uſeful. And I muſt call on thoſe,

who

who have made obſervations on the conduct of the poor in general, in the ſeveral counties where they live, to determine, how great a part of the poor are thus addicted to drunkenneſs; and whether I have not here given a true repreſentation of the manner, in which their children are trained up.

Here then are the numerous nurſeries which ſupply the whole kingdom with every ſpecies of thief and malefactor we yet know of: And in their paſſage from theſe nurſeries, through the ſeveral ſtages of a licentious courſe of life, they are, on different occaſions, confined in the ſeveral kinds of priſons, and receive the puniſhments which our penal laws have affixed to the ſeveral degrees of offences of the lower order; until at laſt, advancing from the leſſer offences to the higheſt, they arrive at the condemn'd hold, from whence they have an opportunity of ſhewing their heroiſm at the gallows.

If this be a true ſketch of the unhappy ſituation of the poor of this kingdom, what pity and compaſſion muſt not every one feel, who conſiders this their miſerable and unhappy ſtate? That inſtead of receiving protection from ſociety, under ſuch wiſe and prudent regulations, as would train them from their infancy to arts of induſtry, and make them not only uſeful, but the moſt valuable ſubjects;

jects; all the temptations to vice and immorality are ſuffered to lie before them; and they are, even in their earlieſt infancy, bound as it were, to a kind of apprenticeſhip to the practices of a licentious courſe of life.

It may be ſaid that all this ariſes from a general neglect in the execution of our penal laws; that there is great variety of penal laws in our ſtatute-books, which appoint puniſhments for every kind of miſdemeanor, and that there are houſes of correction in every county throughout the kingdom, where theſe are adminiſtered; and that all this licentiouſneſs and debauchery, which is now got to ſuch a height among the poor, ariſes from a great remiſſneſs in the execution of the penal laws.

It is very true that our penal laws in general are not ſtrictly executed. But how can they be ſtrictly executed even to the greater part of offenders; ſince near two thirds of every pariſh in the kingdom are in the debauched ſtate I have mentioned? And how comes it to paſs, that our laws in general are not ſtrictly executed? Does not this neceſſarily ariſe from the number of them? How is it poſſible that the laws in any country ſhould be well executed, or even well underſtood, where there is an annual addition made to the ſtatute-books of one large folio volume; a great part of which is taken up with penal

laws,

laws, and, as they are commonly, but falſly, called, remedial laws? Theſe laws, when enacted, are never communicated to the peace officers, but take the common chance with other books of being read, under this ſingular diſcouragement of being ſold at a higher price; for this volume cannot be bought for leſs than forty ſhillings. Under this inconvenience and expence, every juſtice of the peace muſt give up his whole time, the year round, to ſtudy acts of parliament.

I ſhall leave this digreſſion with aſking one queſtion. How intelligible will our laws be twenty years hence, with the addition of twenty large folio volumes to our ſtatute-books? I really fear, that, in a courſe of years, the nation will be as much without law, from the overgrown bulk of our ſtatute-books, as if we had no law at all in the kingdom.

But to return to the ſubject of the poor: It has been obſerved above, that idleneſs and drunkenneſs are the original cauſes of all the evils which it is here propoſed to redreſs; and it has been hinted that, without the aſſiſtance of low credit, this exceſs of drunkenneſs could not be carried to that height, to which it is now grown among the poor. Nothing can be more plain, than that the allowance of this kind of credit, among this claſs of people, muſt produce the moſt miſchievous con-

conſequences, that in every light, in which it can be conſidered, there will not be found any one real advantage, or conveniency to ariſe from it, and that it is impoſſible to hope for any degree of reformation among the poor, as long as this low credit is ſuffered to ſubſiſt among them. It is ſaid that it enables them to ſet up little trades. It is true that it is this low credit, which fills the towns throughout the kingdom, and particularly *London*, with the numbers of little ſhops we find; which I really look upon as publick nuſances every where.

The little low chandlers-ſhops, and all the variety of little ſhops, whatever denomination they take from the buſineſs they pretend to follow, are in general no other than places of debauchery of all kinds, and do, in general, clandeſtinely retail all ordinary kinds of ſpirituous liquors. This will appear, as I am told, from the great number of informations, which are exhibited at the *Exciſe-Office*, weekly, againſt thoſe, who keep theſe ſeveral kinds of little low ſhops, to the amount of no leſs than from an hundred, to a hundred and fifty in a week.

Let us then conſider here how this low credit operates in theſe inſtances. It ſerves the purpoſe of ſuch of the poor, who, from lazineſs, or from a little pride to become venders of goods, inſtead of following the more uſe-

ful, but (as they think) meaner employment of a manufacturer, chuſe to ſet up little ſhops of no ſort of benefit, but in every reſpect prejudicial to the town where they live. For, as they buy chiefly on credit, and conſequently dear, they muſt alſo ſell dear, and do generally ſell on credit. They rarely receive money for what they ſell, and being as backward in their payments of what they owe, find a quick tranſition from theſe ſhops to a priſon. The poor are their only cuſtomers, and what draws them to theſe places, where (if they pay at all) they pay a higher price, than elſewhere, for what they purchaſe, is the opportunity they have of being accommodated, without paying for what they take: and it very often happens, that many of theſe cuſtomers, when they have raiſed their ſcore to any height, abſcond and run away: Whereas, if there were none but ſhops of ſubſtance, the poor would be obliged to pay ready money for what they want: A neceſſary check to keep them in even circumſtances. So that, if we conſider theſe little retailers of all kinds in the moſt favourable light, meerly as venders of what they avow to ſell, it is plain that the credit, which they give for ſmall ſums, does but accelerate the ruin of thoſe who deal with them. Nor are ſuch little ſhops, as theſe, of any kind of uſe whatſoever with regard to keeping down the prices of things, but they

have quite the contrary effect. For, as was obſerved, buying on credit, they buy dear, and muſt therefore ſell dear. They rather encourage the ſelling the commodities, in which they deal, at a high price in the retailing ſhops in general. And it is a very great error to think, that encreaſing the number of ſellers, *in every manner*, will always keep the price of goods low. This, with ſubmiſſion, will not always hold true. And is an error of fatal conſequence in ſome caſes.

To prove my aſſertion, I will take the inſtance of the butchery buſineſs in *London*. For as the greater part of the *London* butchers have not ſubſtance ſufficient to buy a live bullock, or a number of ſheep at the live markets, nor cuſtomers to take off a whole bullock, theſe cannot ſupply themſelves with meat any otherwiſe, than by buying ſuch parts of a bullock as they can diſpoſe of, as well as mutton, of the more ſubſtantial butchers, who make them pay at ſuch rates as they think proper. Theſe muſt have ſome profit, and the price they ſell at, is the price which the more ſubſtantial butchers likewiſe ſet on the meat they retail to their own cuſtomers. It is plain therefore, that the price of meat is raiſed by means of theſe little butchers, and that the conſumer pays more for his meat than he would do, if ſuch low butchers were not ſuffered to trade.

How is the caſe with the graſier who ſends his fat cattle to the *London* markets? There being but a part of the butchers who buy at theſe markets, the price is there kept down, and conſequently the graſier does not receive the true price he ought to have, in proportion as the plenty, or ſcarcity of meat ſhall at any time happen to be. The graſier therefore is apparently injured. We have a wiſe law which ſays, that no man ſhall ſell beef who does not kill beef, yet is not regarded. We have another law in our ſtatute-books, which ſays, that no one who fats cattle, ſhall follow the buſineſs of a butcher. This is founded on miſtaken principles, but has produced many proſecutions, to the great prejudice of the graſier, and the viſible obſtruction of a free and open market. This ſubject deſerves the ſerious attention of the land-owner and manufacturer. But I have not time fully to ſet forth, but only barely to hint at the corruptions, which have crept into *Smithfield* market, which affect the whole kingdom.

But what claim could theſe little retailers have to any right of continuing their ſhops, were their lawful trades even of ſome publick utility or convenience; when we find that, in defiance of the laws, they are the moſt notorious venders of ſpirituous liquors, and that from the moment their ſhops are opened in the morning, gin-drinkers flock in, and a ſucceſſion

ſucceſſion of cuſtomers of this kind is continued, without any interruption, till their ſhops are ſhut up again late at night?

That this town of *London* in particular, and every part of the kingdom, may be delivered from ſuch pernicious nuſances, I could wiſh that a law were paſſed to deſtroy that ſort of credit, which encourages and enables the poor to become retailers of this low kind. The little chandlers, green-grocers, and thoſe who keep cellars, or huts to ſell oyſters, are all of them clandeſtine venders of gin. Theſe will all be forced to lay aſide their employments, if the legiſlature will be pleaſed to deſtroy that low credit which has been the means by which they were enabled to ſet up, and do continue in theſe pernicious employments. Though I have, above, recommended it to the publick to obtain a law to deſtroy all low credit in general, to the value of three pounds, yet I think it would be proper, with regard to all theſe little low ſhops, to raiſe the ſum to ten pound; and that a law ſhould paſs, that no debt, contracted by any tallow-chandler, green-grocer, or ſeller of oyſters, under the value of ten pounds, ſhould be eſteemed a debt, or liable to be ſued for. There are beſides theſe, as I am informed, hawkers of fiſh, who cry their fiſh about the ſtreets in the forenoon, and keep cellars where they expoſe what fiſh remains unſold, in ſtalls before their cellar-doors; theſe

likewiſe ſell gin. There are little fruiterers likewiſe with cellars and ſtalls, who are venders of gin; if theſe could be deſcribed, they ought to be included in ſuch a law.

It may be ſaid in objection to what I have here propoſed for deſtroying all credit with regard to theſe particular retailers to the value of ten pound, or any ſum under ten pounds, that this will entirely break them; and that it would be very injurious, as well as unconſtitutional to put any ſet of people under particular laws. To this I anſwer, that if we cannot obtain a law of this kind, which will effectually put an end to the pernicious traffick, which theſe people carry on, we ſhall find, that this calamity will grow every year more general and fatal. When theſe people, in defiance of the law, retail all theſe liquors without licence, ſhall it not be thought reaſonable and juſt to make a particular law to ſecure the publick from ſuch audacious practices, which threaten the general deſtruction of the lives of the people? I ſhould be ſorry to find, that any law ſhall be thought unconſtitutional, which ſhall be neceſſary to attain, what in my opinion, ought to be one of the principal objects of the legiſlature.

But if notwithſtanding what has been offered in ſupport of this meaſure of deſtroying all credit, with regard to theſe low retailers, for ſums under ten pounds, it ſhould ſtill be thought

thought an improper regulation, I ſhall, however, hope, that what I have propoſed with regard to low credit in general, will be approved of, and that a law to that effect may be obtained, as I am convinced that ſuch a general law is neceſſary at this time.

And leaſt there be any who, notwithſtanding what has been offered, may ſtill doubt whether this low credit is not in ſome degree uſeful to the poor, I would beg of ſuch to conſider, how credit in general operates on individuals of the higher claſſes, and to recollect, how few of thoſe, who make any conſiderable uſe of this privilege, eſcape ruin; and I would beg of them likewiſe to recollect, how few inſtances there are, even among the induſtrious part of the poor, in country pariſhes, of perſons who, inſtead of taking the relief from their pariſh, borrow two or three pounds, are ever able to clear ſuch a debt, or at leaſt ſo ſpeedily, as their creditors generally require; and if they fail, as they generally do, to anſwer the demands of their creditors, they are thrown into jail, and the publick loſes the benefit of their induſtry. And I muſt not omit to take notice of the eaſe the poor will receive, when free'd from theſe exactions, which they are hampered with, in all counties, by ſuch attornies, whoſe practice is almoſt entirely, if not ſolely, confined to recover debts of this ſort.

Nor

Nor is the ſtate of the poor in ſuch places where courts of conſciences are eſtabliſhed much mended; for, by means of this low credit, debts are as frequently contracted in ſuch places, as in any others; and notwithſtanding thoſe courts have a ſummary way of proceeding, the poor are as often taken from their induſtrious employments, to which they ſeldom return, after a confinement of thirty, or forty days.

If a poor perſon is diſturbed, by any means whatſoever, in the induſtrious courſe he is once fixt, he ſeldom ſettles again to induſtry. And I always conſider this claſs of people, as, in ſome reſpects, in a ſtate of minority. They can never, from their ſituation in life, and from the nature of their education, acquire, at any one point of time in life, ſuch a degree of diſcretion, as to be capable of judging properly for themſelves, or to know, without continual guidance, wherein their own well-being conſiſts. And whoever conſiders them in this light, as minors, will ſoon ſee what is proper to be done to ſecure their induſtry, and to preſerve their moral ſtate and happineſs. If this be the true light in which they ought to be conſidered, let me aſk whether the publick, who are their real guardians, ought not to be careful to remove from them, at any rate, all temptations to drunkenneſs? Whether a power of contracting debts is not as dangerous in the hands of theſe, as in ſuch, whom

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the law conſiders as minors? Whether granting privileges of any kind to ſuch minors, be not only improper, but deſtructive to their well-being?

Whether their neceſſary wants, which may ariſe at any time from accidental misfortunes, ſuch as ſickneſs, and diſeaſes of other kinds, ſhould not always be ſupplied by *Gift?* Whether it is not, in ſome degree, a contradiction in our ſtatute-books, to oblige every pariſh in the kingdom to relieve the neceſſities of all poor belonging to their reſpective pariſhes, at the ſame time that there are laws exiſting, which give them credit, and enable them to borrow. Theſe pariſh laws, though they have proved in a great meaſure ineffectual for the purpoſes for which they were intended, are declaratory of the ſenſe of the legiſlature, that the real wants and neceſſities of the poor ſhould be ſupplied to them by gift: But the laws, which ſupport low credit, give them the dangerous privilege of borrowing.

I hope I have now ſaid what is ſufficient to prove, how improper it is to permit low credit to remain, and that I have alſo ſhewn what miſchievous conſequences have attended it; and that it has likewiſe been clearly proved, that it is this low credit, which introduces this exceſs of drunkenneſs among the lower rank of people, and that ſtill ſupports it.

It may here be ſaid, that gin is now ſold at ſo cheap a rate, that there is but a ſlender

uſe of low credit on this article. This I muſt in ſome meaſure allow to be true; and I ſhall in the appendix to theſe papers, conſider what regulations may be made in ſome matters relative to the manufactury of all ſpirituous liquors; and ſhall endeavour to ſhew that, under ſuch regulations, the price of gin, for home conſumption, may be raiſed by an additional duty.

I come now to the head of idleneſs, and ſhall here endeavour to point out what may be a proper method to put the poor under an obligation of being induſtrious. And here our ſtatute-books will aſſiſt us, by providing us with a moſt excellent law, I mean the act of the 9th of the late king: Which act empowers every pariſh in the kingdom to erect a workhouſe for employing and maintaining their own poor, and to take in poor from any other pariſh, at ſuch rates, as ſhall be agreed upon by ſuch contracting pariſhes.

This act likewiſe, in order to eaſe the leſſer pariſhes from the extraordinary expence, which may, in ſome degree, at firſt ariſe in preparing a workhouſe for ſuch purpoſes, empowers any ſuch number of pariſhes, as conveniency ſhall point out, to unite for theſe purpoſes of erecting a workhouſe for maintaining their poor in common; and gives power to pariſhes under ſuch union to take in poor from other pariſhes. What more wiſe diſtribution, founded on the moſt true and juſt notions of

trade,

trade, could be made to promote a general induſtry? Thoſe who framed this act, foreſaw the inefficacy that muſt attend county workhouſes, or the fixing a workhouſe to the ſeveral hundreds in every county; that corruption, which would, by various means, prevail in ſuch caſes, would ſoon deſtroy the induſtry of ſuch workhouſes; and, being perfectly ſenſible, that induſtry, which promotes trade, is beſt ſupported and improved by the rewards, which trade neceſſarily produces to the induſtrious, and that emulation is a neceſſary ſpur to induſtry; they rightly judged that, in the method propoſed by this act, a general ſpirit of induſtry would be beſt preſerved; ſince, by the power of that act, any one pariſh can ſet up a workhouſe at any time, in caſe the workhouſe, to which their poor ſhall be ſent, ſhall at any time grow ſo remiſs in their management, as not to anſwer the publick utility, and the intereſt of the particular pariſhes concerned.

Yet this act, in common with moſt others, has been executed but in very few inſtances, though in thoſe places, where it has been compleatly executed, it has all the good effects, that could be wiſhed for from any law: And the only point now to be inquired after, is, to find out ſuch a method, as ſhall ſecure a general and univerſal execution of this law throughout the whole kingdom. Such a law, I imagine, might be framed, as would

ſecure a general and compleat execution of that ſtatute.

Suppoſe a compulſory law to the following effect ſhould paſs: That the pariſh-officers of every pariſh, in the kingdom of *England* and *Wales* and town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, be obliged to attend at the firſt *Midſummer* quarter ſeſſions in their reſpective counties, after the law is paſſed, and afterwards annually, to give an account, upon oath, of what progreſs they ſhall have made in their reſpective pariſhes towards the full execution of the ſaid act; ſuch account to be entered in their ſeſſions-book: The juſtices in court ordering and directing ſuch pariſh-officers to be diligent and expeditious in getting their ſeveral workhouſes ready: And if the officers of any pariſh, or pariſhes ſhall neglect to attend the quarter ſeſſions as aforeſaid, (due notice having been given to them by the clerk of the peace of the reſpective counties, before the firſt *Midſummer* quarter ſeſſions, after ſuch a compulſory law has paſſed, that the law requires their attendance as aforeſaid, and no perſon or perſons of credit, being pariſhioners of the ſaid reſpective pariſhes, appearing in the behalf of the ſaid pariſh, or pariſh-officers, capable of giving an account, relative to this matter, for which the ſaid officers attendance is by law required) the juſtices, at the ſaid quarter ſeſſions, ſhall ſet the fine of 20*s.* on every pariſh-officer, who ſhall have neglected to attend

tend the ſaid ſeſſions. And the juſtices at the quarter ſeſſions in the ſeveral counties, ſhall order minutes to be entered, in their ſeſſions-books, of the names of the ſeveral pariſhes, together with the names of their officers, who ſhall have neglected to attend the ſaid ſeſſions, and ſhall enter the accounts, which they ſhall receive at the *Midſummer* ſeſſions annually, and fine ſuch pariſh-officers as ſhall be annually found to neglect attending.

And the ſaid juſtices ſhall, at their *Midſummer* ſeſſions, in the year after an act to this effect ſhall paſs, direct, that true copies of the ſeveral accounts, which the officers who ſhall attend at the ſaid *Midſummer* ſeſſions, and of the accounts delivered in at the ſeſſions of the year preceding, of the progreſs which their reſpective pariſhes have made towards the full execution of the aforeſaid act; as well as copies of the minutes entered of the ſeveral pariſh-officers, who neglected to attend at ſuch ſeſſions, and the ſeſſions of the preceding year, together with the names of the reſpective pariſhes to which they belong: Which ſaid copies ſhall be ſigned by all the juſtices preſent at the ſaid quarter ſeſſions; which ſaid copies thus ſigned, the clerk of the ſaid ſeſſions ſhall be directed, by the ſaid juſtices, to deliver to the judges in court, at the aſſizes, which ſhall be held that year, and on the firſt day the aſſizes ſhall be opened.

And

And if the judge of the aſſize ſhall find by the ſaid accounts, which are delivered in by the clerks of the ſeſſions, that any pariſh, or pariſhes have not compleatly executed the ſaid act, in one ſhape or other, under the option it gives, every pariſh guilty of ſuch neglect ſhall be fined in the ſum of 60 *l.* if a market-town, or being a pariſh making part of a market-town or corporation; and in caſe of a pariſh, making part of a city, the ſum of 80 *l.* But in the caſe of a town which ſhall conſiſt only of one pariſh, which ſhall be ſmall, or not of any conſiderable ſize, in every ſuch caſe, the fine ſhall be only 40 *l.* And all the ſaid ſeveral fines, ſet upon ſuch pariſhes as aforementioned, and which ſhall have appeared to have neglected to put the ſaid act in execution, ſhall be annually impoſed in the ſame manner, as long as they ſhall continue under the ſaid neglect. And every pariſh which having put the act in execution, ſhall be found to diſcontinue their compliance with the ſaid act, ſhall in the firſt year, and in every year during its diſcontinuance in not complying with the ſaid act, or ſuch directions as ſhall be ordered by this compulſory law, be fined in the ſums abovementioned; and all the ſaid ſeveral fines, which ſhall be at any time ſet upon any pariſhes for not executing the ſaid act, or for neglecting to continue the obſervance of the ſaid act, as well as the fines which ſhall be ſet at any time upon any pa-

riſh-

riſh-officers for neglecting to attend the quarter ſeſſions, or the aſſizes in their reſpective counties as aforementioned, ſhall be paid into the hands of the receiver-general of the county: The fines which ſhall at any time be ſet upon the pariſhes to be collected by the overſeers of the poor, in proportion as the poor rates are collected on the occupiers of the lands in the pariſh, or pariſhes which ſhall be ſo aſſeſſed, and to be paid by the ſaid overſeers, into the hands of the collectors of the land-tax, to be by them, paid into the hands of the receiver-general of the reſpective counties, and to be by him paid into the exchequer, and to be accounted for to parliament.

I ſhall not here pretend to deſcribe the exact form of ſuch a law, as may be proper for the purpoſes of ſecuring a perfect execution of this ſtatute of the 9th of the late king: The ſketch I have already given, may be ſufficient to explain what kind of regulations I imagine would unavoidably promote the compleat execution of that act. I ſhall only obſerve further, that it would be neceſſary to have ſeveral reſtrictions in ſuch a law, to ſecure the perfect Utility of the workhouſes, which, will under this plan, become general all over the kingdom, and may prevent thoſe corruptions from taking place, which we find do attend moſt of the workhouſes, which are at preſent eſtabliſhed.

In

In order that it may be underſtood what kind of reſtriction I mean, it may be neceſſary to mention, that in the caſe of a pariſh which ſhall, by virtue of this act of the 9th of the late king, make its option to ſend its poor to the workhouſe of another pariſh, or to ſuch as are under a union, that exact copies of every agreement, that ſhall be made between the churchwardens and overſeers of the two contracting pariſhes, for ſending their poor from one pariſh to the workhouſe of another pariſh, ſhould be poſted up in the moſt public and conſpicuous parts of the reſpective pariſhes, or places, there to remain for the ſpace of three days.

Another reſtriction is, that every pariſh which ſhall ſet up a workhouſe, or ſhall ſhare in, or under a union, ſhould likewiſe be reſtrained from letting their workhouſe to any perſon in any manner, ſo as ſuch perſon may be conſidered, in any degree, as a kind of tenant to the workhouſe, and who paying ſuch a rent, ſhall have the whole management of ſuch workhouſe, and bear the profits and loſſes which ſhall attend it; and that every pariſh as aforeſaid, ſhall be reſtrained even from contracting with any perſon, or perſons, by the year, or for any leſſer proportion of time, for providing fuel for their workhouſes, or any other neceſſaries which are continually wanted. Theſe, and other reſtrictions may be neceſſary to ſecure the

perfect

perfect utility of the workhouſes to be erected under this general plan;—and it is for want of theſe, and other reſtrictions, that ſeveral corruptions have entered into moſt of the workhouſes, which are now erected in the kingdom; and from thence ariſe thoſe objections, which many make to the inefficacy of workhouſes for producing a ſpirit of induſtry.

Though it may juſtly be obſerved, that even the words beggar and vagabond have never been mentioned in theſe papers, yet whoever will conſider the great effects which muſt ariſe to the public from ſuppreſſing drunkenneſs by thoſe means I have propoſed; and likewiſe, that a general ſpirit of induſtry muſt inevitably be produced univerſally throughout the whole kingdom, by the perfect execution of the ſtatute of the 9th of the late king, (the execution of which ſtatute will undoubtedly be ſecured by a compulſory law of ſuch kind as I have here imperfectly ſketched out, the intended compaſs of theſe papers not allowing me to be particular) I ſay, whoever will conſider theſe points, will find, after a ſhort time, and a very little experience, that the number of ſtrollers will gradually diminiſh, idleneſs and vice daily wear out, and *London* be free'd from this noxious refuſe which now centers in it.

APPENDIX.

IT is an opinion in general received, that the allowance of a *bounty* on *corn is* beneficial to the farmer, and conſequently to the nation.

In order to ſet this matter in a true light, I ſhall lay down ſuch general *maxims* of trade as cannot, in my opinion, be controverted, on which this queſtion does in a great meaſure depend.

That the *wealth* of any *nation* is in proportion to its quantity of *trade* and number of manufacturies.

That the *value* of the produce of ſuch a nation is likewiſe in the ſame proportion.

That the continuance of its manufacturies, trade, and wealth, depends ſolely on the degree of vent its manufactures have in foreign markets.

That good regulations for promoting univerſal induſtry, are neceſſary among the people of ſuch a nation.

That it is the intereſt of ſuch a nation to ſuffer its ports to be opened for the admiſſion of every kind of foreign produce, or manufacture whatſoever, to which any degree of labour can be added: And that labour is diſtant wealth.

That

That contradicting this maxim, by laying duties, or prohibitions, on any kind, or all kinds of foreign produce, or on foreign goods imperfectly manufactured, forces ſuch foreign nation, or nations, to ſet up new manufactures, and to improve their old, to the detriment of the country, where ſuch prohibitions are eſtabliſhed.

That conſequently, by the known rule of contraries, ſending out any commodities unmanufactured, or which are not fully manufactured, muſt be detrimental to any country.

That it muſt ſtill be more detrimental to any country to grant a bounty for exportation of its commodities of this ſort.

That corn, as it is capable of being manufactured, is unqueſtionably a commodity of this ſort.

If theſe maxims appear to others, as they do to me, how improper muſt it be to continue a bounty on corn?

To ſhew, in fact, the price of wheat in *England* has been lower ſince the bounty was granted than before, I ſhall compare the prices of wheat, as they ſtood from the ſeveral mediums taken upon different numbers of years, ſince the bounty was firſt allowed, in the year 1689, with the prices found from mediums, taken upon equal numbers of years, before the bounty took place.

This eſtimation is taken from an account, intitled an account of the true market price of wheat and malt at *Windſor*, for 100 years, began and publiſhed by *William Fleetwood*, biſhop of *Ely*, from 1646 to 1706, and ſince continued in the ſame manner to the year 1745, which account is generally eſteemed accurate.

	£.	s.	d.
The price of wheat *per* quarter, upon a medium taken on 43 years, from 1646, being the firſt year the account commences, to 1688, the year before the bounty was allowed, appears to be at the rate of —— — — — —	2	10	8
From the medium taken on 43 years, from 1689, being the firſt year the bounty took place, to the year 1731, the price of wheat *per* quarter appears to be	1	18	0
An annual loſs to the farmer in price ſince the bounty took place —— —— — —		12	8
From 1669 to 1688, being the laſt 20 years before the bounty was allowed, the price of wheat *per* quarter, was at a medium —	2	6	2

From 1726 to 1745, being the laſt 20 years, in this account, the

price

price of wheat at a medium *per* quarter was ——— — — 1 17 9¾

An annual loſs to the farmer in price ſince the bounty took place ——— — — — 0 8 4¼

The medium on wheat from 1649 to 1668, being 20 years, was *per* quarter——— 2 12 8½

The medium from 1706 to 1725, being 20 years, was *per* quarter ——— — — 2 4 9

An annual loſs to the farmer in price ſince the bounty took place —— — — — — 0 7 11½

The medium on wheat for 14 years from 1675 to 1688, was *per* quarter —— — — 2 5 4¾

The medium on wheat for 14 years from 1732 to 1745, was *per* quarter —— — — 1 15 6½

An annual loſs to the farmer in price ſince the bounty took place — — — — — — — 0 9 9¾

If this account of the biſhop be accurate, and the eſtimations of the mediums of the prices

prices for the ſeveral years as above, correctly taken, the loſs is very evident. I likewiſe find, that from the year 1689, being the year when the bounty was firſt allowed, to the year 1745, when the account ends, containing the ſpace of 57 years, that the farmer has received annually 8*s.* 5*d.* *per* quarter leſs for his wheat, than it bore, one year with another, for 43 years preceding the year, when the bounty was firſt allowed.

If the prices of barley, and other kinds of corn, had been ſtated there, I ſhould have been enabled to have made the ſame computations on them, which would have ſhewn how the mediums ſtood upon them, and am ſatisfied, they alſo would appear, upon ſuch an eſtimate, to be lowered conſiderably in their prices ſince the bounty.

If the freight from *London* to *Holland* be deducted, which is 1*s.* 5*d.* ½ *per* quarter, out of 2*s.* 6*d.* which is the bounty *per* quarter, the remainder being 1*s.* 0*d.* ½ is the encouragement given to the merchant to export barley, which encouragement is at the rate of 7*l.* 7*s.* 11*d.* *percent.* So likewiſe with regard to wheat, when the price of wheat is at 1*l.* 4*s.* *per* quarter, deducting the freight, which I ſuppoſe to be 1*s.* 5*d.* ½ *per* quarter, out of the bounty of 5*s.* *per* quarter, the remainder, 3*s.* 5*d.* ½ is the encouragement given to the merchant by the bounty *per* quarter to export wheat, which in the way of

of trade, is at the rate of 14 *l.* 15 *s.* 1 *d. per cent.*

So that in the caſe of barley, it appears, that whatever the corn-merchant will allow out of this 7 *l.* 7 *s.* 11 *d. per cent.* to tempt the foreigner to buy our corn, that allowance, whatever it be, whether at the rate of 2, 3, or 4 *per cent.* will be the advantage that every ſuch foreigner will have in his manufactury of barley of *Engliſh* growth, over the *Engliſh* manufacturer of the ſame commodity, at every foreign market.

14 *l.* 15 *s.* 1 *d. per cent.* is the encouragement, which the bounty on wheat gives to the merchant: Whatever proportion of this encouragement, whether it be 5, 6, 8, or 10 *per cent.* he may chuſe to allow out of this to the foreigner; juſt ſo much cheaper will the foreigner be enabled to work, and ſell his manufacture than an *Engliſhman* can.

And what is ſtill more grievous in this caſe is, that we always find it very difficult, if not impoſſible, in all caſes where there is any degree of diſproportion in the price of a foreign manufacture, and our own, to prevent, by any penal laws, ſuch manufacture from being run in upon us.

That the running of the foreign manufacture of this kind has encreaſed upon us ever ſince the bounty took place, appears, from the many laws which have been made ever ſince that time, to prevent the foreign manufacture

of

of this kind from gaining a vent in our home-market.

If this be a true repreſentation of the ill effects of this bounty, beſides the loſs occaſioned by it to the nation in general, how great is that, which it immediately brings on the farmer? and how can we without taking off this bounty, pretend to make any regulation for raiſing the price of ſpirituous liquors, to prevent the melancholy effects, that ariſe from the exceſs in the uſe of them?

But if the bounty be withdrawn, a check will be given to the introduction of any ſuch foreign manufactured liquors, and we may then venture, properly and ſafely, to lay ſome further additional duty upon our own, which will encreaſe their price; and conſequently the methods, propoſed in the former part of theſe papers, will operate more ſtrongly to ſuppreſs the debauchery in theſe liquors, which ſo ſcandalouſly prevails.

If, notwithſtanding what has been proved above, that the farmer has ſold his wheat at the annual rate of 8*s.* 5*d. per* quarter leſs, ſince the bounty was allowed in the year 1689, than he did before, for the courſe of 43 years preceding that time, it be ſaid, that *Holland*, or any other particular country will be furniſhed with corn from other parts of *Europe*, inſtead of buying ours, and ſo continue their manufactury of ſpirituous liquors: And that, as the *Engliſh* manufacturers of

of this kind have never yet gained any vent at a foreign market, it is a meer chimæra to expect they ever ſhould gain ſuch vent.

In anſwer to this it may be ſaid, that when the price of corn in *England* is lower than it is in *Holland*, and in other foreign market or markets, our corn will have a vent at ſuch foreign market, or markets, without the aſſiſtance of a bounty; and that in fact, *Holland* buys our corn for no other reaſon, than becauſe it buys it cheaper, or as cheap, as it does of any other country. And all other countries that purchaſe it of us, are moved by the ſame conſiderations: That in fact, corn has been of late years produced in *England*, with as little, or leſs expence, than in any other part of *Europe*, notwithſtanding the many diſadvantages under which *farming* labours from ſeveral laws, meant indeed for its encouragement, but in truth very injurious to its true intereſt: Such for inſtance, is the law prohibiting the importation of great cattle, which raiſes their price exceſſively, and is therefore a palpable hindrance to the farmer's purchaſing ſuch numbers of them, as he could conveniently fat, or otherwiſe make a profit of, which he now loſes; and this loſs is accompanied with another, that of their manure, which annually leſſens his crops of corn.

I muſt hint again at the inconvenience felt by the farmer, nearly and ſenſibly, from the

want of a free market at home, which *Smithfield* certainly is not, to ſpeak of it in the moſt gentle terms.

It is certain likewiſe, that the prohibition on raw hides is another injury to the farmer, as it diſcourages the manufacture of leather at home, and promotes it abroad, and conſequently leſſens the farmer's price for raw hides; conſiderably leſſens the number of hands in *England*; this as neceſſarily decreaſes manufactures of this, and every other ſort; and manufactures are ultimately the ſupport of farming.

And with regard to the objection, that lands have riſen, and improvements of them encreaſed, while the bounty has ſubſiſted: the fact is true, but it has been owing rather to accidental cauſes, than to any other; it depends not at all on the bounty, as has been ſhewn, and will further appear. It has been in truth, owing to the ſafety and ſecurity, in which every man found his perſon, and property in *England*, and which were not equally ſafe any where elſe. Security is the beſt friend to induſtry: Our neighbours, eſpecially of *France*, have ſeen the truth of this maxim, and for 20 years paſt, have done a great deal to eſtabliſh it. In ſhort, we are indebted for the riſe of our trade, and conſequently for the riſe of our lands, more to the faults and weakneſſes of our neighbours, than to any wiſe eſtabliſhments of our own.

So

So that to contrive a method for the vent of our own produce unmanufactured, is really contriving a way to empoveriſh ourſelves. For in ſo doing, we entirely give up the manufactury of ſuch produce, and in this particular caſe with regard to corn (as it muſt be conſidered in another light, as a neceſſary of life) we do, by ſuch means, endeavour, that ſuch foreign country, or countries, ſhall be accommodated with a neceſſary of life, in as cheap a manner as is poſſible; and conſequently, enable them, by reducing their price of labour, to underſell us in every manufacture whatſoever.

How then can it be ſaid, that the rents of land depend entirely on corn, eſpecially as the great riſe in rents did not commence till near twenty years after the revolution, the æra of the bounty, ſince I have ſhewn, that there are other, and very conſiderable cauſes of the riſe of the rents of land, beſides that of corn?

I have hitherto been arguing againſt all bounties for the exportation of our own corn; but I will advance a ſtep further, and venture to aſſert, that any degree of prohibition, at any time, on the importation of *foreign* corn, will be detrimental to the nation, ſince, by preventing the admiſſion of it, when our own growth ſhall be dearer than that of foreign nations, the price of our labour muſt riſe, and our neighbours, in ſuch caſe, will

not only greatly underſell us in their manufactures of this commodity, but, in ſome degree, in all others.

From hence I think it plainly appears, that the courſe of trade in corn ſhould be ſuffered to ebb and flow, as the markets of *Europe* ſhall direct; and that our ports ſhould always be open to a free courſe of trade in this particular.

To ſay as ſome do, that becauſe poſſibly we never have had any vent for our manufacture of ſpirituous liquors, in any foreign markets, that therefore we can never arrive at ſuch perfection in goodneſs and cheapneſs as to gain one, ſeems to me a very ſtrange aſſertion; unleſs it can be proved, that our laws in trade direct ſuch regulations, as give a fair trial of the induſtry and capacities of the people. But we have made no ſuch trial, nor is it indeed poſſible to make it as long as the bounty remains.

To conclude with a ſummary view of the deſign of the foregoing papers. They aim at putting an end to low credit, as the only means to ſecure the morals of the people; and to ſecure their induſtry, they adviſe the erecting of workhouſes, on the plan of the act of the 9th of the late king, by a compulſory law, properly contrived. They explain the ~~inconveniencies of the~~ bounty on corn, as damages ariſing from a it renders the price of corn dearer at home, than abroad; and of courſe, foreign manufactures,

factures, as far as they depend on corn, cheaper than our own. They hint at the loſs to the nation in general, and to all farmers in particular, from the excluſion of great cattle. They hint further at the great abuſe, which wants curing in *Smithfield* market. They ſhew, on the whole, the neceſſity of the remedies, pointed out in the courſe of theſe papers, for the ſeveral evils abovementioned: Which if not applied very ſoon, the certain conſequence will be, a decline of trade, a decreaſe of people, and a fall of the rents of land throughout the kingdom.

F I N I S.